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ON RECOGNIZING THE 80TH BIRTHDAY OF F. WILLARD VICKERY AND HIS IMPACT ON THE SCOUTING COMMUNITY AND NORTHWEST FLORIDA

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 16, 2007

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 80th birthday of F. Willard Vickery and his impact on the scouting community and Northwest Florida.

Mr. Vick, as he is known, began his journey in scouting in 1939, obtaining the rank of Eagle Scout five years later. Ever since his 12th birthday in 1939, he has held the Boy Scouts of America in the highest regard. Because of this pivotal time in our nation's history, Mr. Vick served as the Scoutmaster when adult leaders were sent off for military service. Soon he would follow his former Scoutmasters' paths by joining the United States Navy upon graduating from high school, and served in the medical corps in Tennessee. He remained in Tennessee after the War's end and attended college there. It was during this time that he became involved once again with scouting at a local camp, and also met Annie, his wife of nearly 59 years.

After graduating college, he became a full-time employee of the Boy Scouts of America in Chattanooga, Tennessee. This was the first of several scouting camps that Mr. Vick would be instrumental in having built throughout the South. Throughout the next decade, his career led him to Georgia and then Arkansas. As his professional experience grew, so did his reputation as a great scout leader. Mr. Vick became known as a leader who put passion into the development of professional young men through the Boy Scouts. In fact, the governor of Arkansas at the time was so impressed that he specifically tasked his son with learning from Mr. Vick.

In the early 1960s, Mr. Vick brought his family to Pensacola, Florida. Soon after, he

was named the Executive Scout for the Gulf Coast Council. During his time in this position Mr. Vick made a very notable hire. Roy Williams, who was hired to be the Finance Director, later went on to become the Chief Executive of the Boy Scouts of America. There is no doubt in my mind that the leadership and mentoring provided by Mr. Vick played an instrumental role in shaping Roy into the scout leader he is today.

Mr. Vick also worked with many outside the scouting community, including members of First Baptist Church and Rotary International. He was a host for several foreign exchange students and also served on the Community Task Force addressing the problem of violence in public schools. Other educational work included serving as a volunteer drumming teacher to elementary and middle school students.

Certainly, scouting was the mainstay through most of his life, eventually earning him the Distinguished Eagle Scout Award. His strong faith, along with that of his wife Annie, helped to guide and focus men and women of all ages to become better people through helping themselves and helping others.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, it is an honor for me to recognize F. Willard Vickery on the occasion of his 80th birthday. His leadership through faith and good deeds to this day leaves an everlasting impression on those who know him.

THE SECURE RURAL SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY SELF-DETERMINATION ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN T. DOOLITTLE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 12, 2007

Mr. DOOLITTLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my great concern over the current funding situation facing rural schools. The Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 provided compensation to counties with a large presence of National Forest lands. Unfortunately, the law authorizing these payments expired at the end of 2006. When it became apparent the reauthorization would not pass the House through regular order during the 109th Congress, my col-

leagues and I introduced H.R. 6423, which would have extended the funding for one year, providing us with more time to work for a long-term solution. Despite our efforts, the 109th Congress adjourned without reauthorizing the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act. However, I maintain my commitment to providing this much-needed funding for rural counties.

I fully support the reauthorization of this law, which provides essential funding for over 4,400 schools in 780 counties. This money compensates counties for the loss of tax revenue as the Federal Government placed large amounts of land in forest reserves. The revenue-sharing mechanism that was created for the counties when this land transfer occurred is no longer viable due to decreasing timber sales.

With nearly 5.5 million acres of National Forests in my Congressional District, my counties are greatly affected by the expiration of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000. As an example from a county in my district, Plumas County School District receives roughly \$2.5 million annually from this program, which represents 20 percent of their annual operating budget. Without this funding, the County is preparing to:

Lay off 9 administrators (out of a total of 16); lay off 47 teachers (out of a total of 150); close all school libraries; possibly close some or all cafeterias and cut transportation activities.

In Sierra County, schools will be shut down and students will be bussed up to 3 hours over the State line to attend school in Nevada. As you can see, reauthorization of this program is essential.

The Federal Government has a responsibility to compensate these counties from which large amounts of land were taken to create the National Forest System, and by failing to produce a real solution that will provide this funding, we are neglecting that responsibility.

I was disappointed to see that no funding was provided for rural schools in the continuing resolution we have recently passed. I am hopeful that the emergency supplemental we will soon consider will contain the needed funding for these counties, which are truly in dire circumstances.